

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 MCT-01 SY-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /062 W

-----052250Z 021590 /66

P R 051747Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3098

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY PANAMA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PINT, NU

SUBJECT: URBAN ATTACK ON NATIONAL GUARD (GN)

REF: MANAGUA 2054

SUMMARY: ONE DAY AFTER NICARAGUA'S ARCHBISHOP PUBLICLY CALLED FOR END TO VIOLENCE, TWO SEPARATE ATTACKS WERE MADE ON GN PATROLS IN CITIES OF ESTELI AND MANAGUA APPARENTLY BY FSLN GUERRILLAS.
END SUMMARY

1. ABOUT 0600 ON MAY 4 IN ESTELI GN PATROL JEEP WAS APPARENTLY AMBUSED. THERE WAS MACHINE GUN FIRE AND, ACCORDING TO GON CONTROLLED NEWSPAPER NOVEDADES, TWO GRENADES WERE THROWN BUT ONLY ONE EXPLODED. TWO RECRUITS WERE KILLED AND AT LEAST TWO OTHERS ARE SERIOUSLY WOUNDED. THERE WERE NO KNOWN CASUALTIES AMONG ATTACKERS AND NONE CAPTURED. ATTACKERS WERE LINKED TO FSLN GUERRILLAS BY PROPAGANDA AND OTHER ARTICLES LEFT BEHIND.

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2. ABOUT TWO HOURS LATER, IN MANAGUA, TWO PERSONS ON A MOTORCYCLE REPORTEDLY THREW A GRENADE OR HOME-MADE BOMB AT A GN PATROL JEEP WHICH BOUNCED OFF AND EXPLODED HARMLESSLY. IN THEIR ATTEMPT TO FLEE THE MOTORCYCLE SPILLED AND CHARLOTTE BALDODANO DE ESPINOZA WAS CAPTURED. HER MALE COMPANION MANAGED TO ESCAPE, AT LEAST TEMPORARILY. ESPINOZA WAS REPORTED ARMED BUT HER PISTOL MISFIRED WHEN SHE ATTEMPTED TO FIRE AT THE GN TROOPS. SHE WAS RECENTLY

CONVICTED IN ABSENTIA ALONG WITH FSLN INDICTEES AND SENTENCED TO 30 YEARS IMPRISONMENT FOR A VARIETY OF CRIMES INCLUDING COMPLICITY IN THE DECEMBER 1974, LOS ROBLES TERRORIST ATTACK WHICH LED TO THE IMPOSITION OF MARTIAL LAW. BECAUSE SHE HAS ALREADY BEEN SENTENCED, HER ARREST WILL NOT CONSTITUTE A BASIS FOR CONVOKING A NEW MILITARY COURT PROCEEDING.

3. THE GON HAS GIVEN MAJOR PUBLICITY TO THESE TWO INCIDENTS DISPLAYING PICTURES OF THE CORPSES OF THE TWO GN RECRUITS AND OF TWO OTHERS HOSPITALIZED UNDER THE HEADLINE: QUOTE IN LESS THAN 24 HOURS THEY RESPOND WITH VIOLENCE TO THE APPEAL FROM THE ARCHBISHOP UNQUOTE. THIS REFERS TO THE APPEAL FOR AN END TO VIOLENCE BY ARCHBISHOP OBANDO Y BRAVO (REFTEL. NOVEDADES RAISES QUESTION QUOTE WOULDN'T IT BE BETTER FOR THE CATHOLIC CHURCH TO TAKE A CLEARLY

DEFINED POSITION, C NDEMNING THESE CRIMINAL ACTS, AND NOT A JUBIOUS POSITION AS IT HAS BEEN DOING WITH THE RECENT PASTORAL AND WITH THE INVOCATION OF MONSEÑOR OBANDO IN THE CONGRESS UNQUOTE. IT GOES ON TO CALL ON THE CHURCH TO STOP PLAYING THE GAME OF THE ENEMIES OF PEACE.

4. THESE INCIDENTS ARE THE FIRST EVIDENCE OF URBAN TERRORISM. IT IS NOT YET KNOWN IF THEY WERE PLANNED AND COORDINATED OR SIMPLY COINCIDENTAL. HOWEVER, THE GN IS CLEARLY NERVOUS AND WILL BE MORE RELUCTANT THAN EVER TO SEE MARTIAL LAW LIFTED. SOMOZA HAS BEEN GIVEN FURTHER ARGUMENTATION FOR ITS MAINTENANCE. THEBERGE

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Disposition Reason:
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